

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BONN 03012 01 OF 03 161849Z
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L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
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INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USBERLIN
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BONN 03012

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, BQG
SUBJECT: FRG PROPOSAL FOR COMPROMISE SOLUTION TO
NATIONALSTIFTUNG PROBLEM

REFS: (A) USBER 346
(B) BONN 2440
(C) 77 BONN 21092
(D) 77 BONN 19008
(E) 77 BONN 20740

SUMMARY: AT THE FEBRUARY 14 BONN GROUP MEETING, WE
WERE INFORMED THAT THE FRG MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR HAS
PREPARED A DRAFT OF AN AGREEMENT FOR AN "INTERIM
SOLUTION" TO THE NATIONALSTIFTUNG PROBLEM. THE DRAFT,
WHICH IS TO BE DISCUSSED BY THE CHANCELLOR, MAIHOFFER
AND GENSCHER FEBRUARY 16, WOULD PROVIDE THAT A FUND BE
SET UP TO BE ADMINISTERED BY THE PREUSSISCHER KULTURBESITZ
IN BERLIN AND THAT THIS FUND WOULD BE USED TO PURCHASE
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PAGE 02 BONN 03012 01 OF 03 161849Z

ART OBJECTS, PROMOTE CULTURAL ACTIVITIES, ETC.
BECAUSE THE DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED AGREEMENT SOUNDS
ALMOST LIKE THE NATIONALSTIFTUNG BY ANOTHER NAME (THE
MAJOR DIFFERENCE IS THAT NO NEW OFFICE WILL BE
ESTABLISHED IN BERLIN) AND IS LIKELY TO AROUSE SOVIET
IRE, THE ALLIED BONN GROUP REPS EXPRESSED CONCERN AT
THE PROPOSAL AND ASKED THAT, IF THE PROPOSAL GOES

FORWARD, THE ALLIES BE CONSULTED AS THEY HAD EARLIER
ASKED TO BE ON THE QUESTION OF THE NATIONAL-
STIFTUNG. END SUMMARY

1. AT THE FEBRUARY 14 BONN GROUP MEETING, THE FRG REP
(VON BRAUNMUEHL) REPORTED THAT THE CHANCELLOR WILL MEET
WITH FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER (AS HEAD OF THE FDP)

AND INTERIOR MINISTER MAIHOFFER ON FEBRUARY 16 TO DISCUSS
THE QUESTION OF THE "SOLUTION" TO THE NATIONALSTIFTUNG
(NATIONAL FOUNDATION) PROBLEM. SPECIFICALLY, A DRAFT
ADMINISTRATIVE AGREEMENT, PREPARED BY THE MINISTRY OF
THE INTERIOR, AND PROPOSED FOR CONCLUSION BETWEEN THE
FRG, THE LAENDER AND THE PREUSSISCHER
KULTURBESITZ IN BERLIN, WILL BE CONSIDERED. IT WILL
BE DECIDED ON FEBRUARY 16 WHETHER THE MATTER WILL BE
DISCUSSED BY THE CHANCELLOR WITH THE LAENDER MINISTER
PRESIDENTS AT THEIR SCHEDULED MEETING ON FEBRUARY 17.

2. VON BRAUNMUEHL DESCRIBED THE DRAFT AGREEMENT BRIEFLY
(HE WAS NOT AUTHORIZED TO PROVIDE A COPY). THE AGREE-
MENT PROVIDES THAT AS A TEMPORARY SOLUTION, PENDING THE
FINAL ESTABLISHMENT OF A FOUNDATION, A SPECIAL FUND WILL
BE CREATED TO BE ADMINISTERED BY THE PREUSSISCHER
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PAGE 03 BONN 03012 01 OF 03 161849Z

KULTURBESITZ. THE TASK OF THE SPECIAL FUND WILL BE TO
PROMOTE THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF THE "BUNDESREPUBLIK
ALS GANZES" (FEDERAL REPUBLIC AS A WHOLE, A NEW TERM
WHICH APPARENTLY IS MEANT TO ENCOMPASS BERLIN) BY THE
PURCHASE OF ART TREASURES (INTER ALIA TO PREVENT THEM
FROM BEING REMOVED ABROAD), THE SPONSORSHIP OF
EXHIBITIONS AND MEETINGS, THE SUBSIDY OF CULTURAL PRO-
JECTS AND ACTIVITIES, ETC. THE KULTURBESITZ WILL
UNDERTAKE THESE ACTIVITIES AS TRUSTEE FOR THE
NOT-YET-ESTABLISHED FOUNDATION. ANY INCREASE IN
PERSONNEL REQUIRED BY THE KULTURBESITZ WILL BE PAID FOR
OUT OF THE FUND. NO NEW OFFICE WILL BE ESTABLISHED IN
BERLIN.

3. VON BRAUNMUEHL SAID THAT THE FRG BELIEVES
THAT THIS WILL AVOID MANY OF THE PROBLEMS WHICH THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NATIONALSTIFTUNG WOULD HAVE
OCCASIONED. HE SAID HE DID NOT WISH TO INVITE CRITICAL
COMMENTS, BUT, AT THE SAME TIME, IF THE ALLIES HAD
ANY NEGATIVE OBSERVATIONS THEY SHOULD MAKE THEM NOW SO
THAT THE CHANCELLOR WOULD NOT BE LED TO BELIEVE THAT THIS
PROPOSAL HAD THE FULL AGREEMENT OF THE ALLIES.

4. UK REP (EYERS) SAID THAT THE DESCRIPTION OF THE
DRAFT AGREEMENT IMPLIES THAT THIS IS SOMETHING
DIFFERENT FROM THAT WHICH WE HAD UNDERSTOOD EARLIER

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PAGE 01 BONN 03012 02 OF 03 161855Z
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L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 03 BONN 03012

(REF C). IT SUGGESTS THAT THERE WILL BE AN INCREASE
IN PERSONNEL IN AN ORGANIZATION IN BERLIN, AN ORGANIZA-
TION WHICH IS TAKING OVER THE RESPONSIBILITY WHICH THE
NATIONALSTIFTUNG WOULD HAVE ASSUMED. AS SUCH, IT
APPEARS THAT THIS IS A SURROGATE FOR THE NATIONALSTIF-
TUNG AND THAT THERE IS A RISK OF LEAPING FROM THE FRYING
PAN INTO THE FIRE. HE SAID THAT THERE WAS NO TIME TO
REPORT TO AND OBTAIN THE VIEWS OF CAPITALS PRIOR TO THE
MEETING OF FEBRUARY 16 BUT HE RECALLED HIS AMBASSADOR'S
COMMENTS AT THE NOVEMBER MEETING WITH VAN WELL (REF D).

5. THE US REP SAID HE AGREED WITH EYERS' COMMENTS
AND SUGGESTED THAT WE LOOK AT THE CENTRAL CORE OF THE
PROBLEM. AS THE DRAFT AGREEMENT WAS DESCRIBED, IT
PORTRAYED THE NEW PROPOSAL AS THE NATIONALSTIFTUNG BUT
WITH ANOTHER NAME, I.E. THE SAME ORGANIZATION IN NEW

GARB. HE ASSUMED THAT THIS WAS FOR PRESENTATIONAL
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PAGE 02 BONN 03012 02 OF 03 161855Z

PURPOSES, ESPECIALLY FOR INTERNAL POLITICAL REASONS, AND ALSO ASSUMED THAT THIS SAME PRESENTATION WOULD BE MADE PUBLICLY IN THE FRG AND BERLIN. THE DIFFICULTY IS THAT THIS FORM OF PRESENTATION, WHILE IT MAY HAVE ONE EFFECT IN THE FRG AND BERLIN (I.E. ABATE CDU/CSU CRITICISM) WILL HAVE EXACTLY THE OPPOSITE EFFECT WITH RESPECT TO THE SOVIETS AND THE GDR. THE GDR SENSITIVITIES MIGHT BE EVEN MORE ENGAGED BECAUSE OF THE ROLE OF THE PREUSSISCHER KULTURBESITZ SINCE THE LATTER IS NOT ONLY "PRUSSIAN" BUT IS ALSO IN POSSESSION OF ART OBJECTS WHICH THE GDR CLAIMS BELONGS TO IT.

6. THE US REP NOTED THAT THERE WAS NOT ADEQUATE TIME TO CONSULT WITH CAPITALS ON THIS SUBJECT BUT RECALLED AMBASSADOR STOESSEL'S COMMENTS AT THE MEETING WITH VAN WELL. HE NOTED THAT THE ALLIES HAD NEVER BEEN FORMALLY ASKED TO PASS ON THE NATIONALSTIFTUNG QUESTION, ALTHOUGH THEY WERE PREPARED TO DO SO, AND ASKED THAT THE ALLIES BE CONSULTED WHEN THE FRG CONSIDERED IT APPROPRIATE REGARDING THIS REVISED PROPOSAL.

7. THE FRENCH REP (RICHARD) EXPRESSED SIMILAR VIEWS AND NOTED THAT THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME THAT THE NEW PROJECT, WHICH WE HAD BEEN LED TO BELIEVE WOULD AVOID MANY OF THE PROBLEMS OF THE NATIONALSTIFTUNG, HAD BEEN OUTLINED WITH SUCH CLEAR FEATURES. HE ALSO REFERRED TO HIS AMBASSADOR'S COMMENTS AT THE MEETING WITH VAN WELL.

8. BERLIN REPRESENTATIVE (MEICHSNER) SAID THAT THE FRG AND THE SENAT HAD ATTEMPTED TO FIND ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF DEALING WITH THE NATIONALSTIFTUNG PROBLEM. THIS IS A NEW ATTEMPT. HE EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT IT
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PAGE 03 BONN 03012 02 OF 03 161855Z

WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT TO AVOID A TIE TO BERLIN; THE OPPOSITION PRESSURE WOULD BE TOO GREAT. HOWEVER, IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO REVIEW THOSE INDIVIDUAL ASPECTS OF THE PROPOSED SOLUTION WHICH CREATE PROBLEMS. VON BRAUNMUEHL SAID THAT MAYOR STOBBE HAS MADE A PERSONALLY COURAGEOUS EFFORT REGARDING THIS MATTER IN AN ATTEMPT TO FIND A SOLUTION WHICH WOULD NOT BE FRAUGHT WITH THE SAME COMPLICATIONS AS THE NATIONALSTIFTUNG, AN

EFFORT WHICH ALL THREE ALLIED REPS PRAISED.

9. VON BRAUNMUEHL SAID THAT WHEN THE NATIONALSTIFTUNG HAD BEEN DISCUSSED, THE FRG UNDERSTOOD THAT THE ALLIED PREFERENCE WAS FOR THE FRG TO DECIDE WHETHER TO ESTABLISH THE ORGANIZATION AND THEN TO ASK FOR ALLIED CONSULTATIONS. HE ASKED WHEN THE ALLIES WOULD LIKE TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEM NOW.

10. EYERS SAID THAT THE QUESTION REVOLVES AROUND WHETHER THERE WILL BE A BERLIN CONNECTION. IF THERE IS, THE UK WILL BE CONCERNED. IF THERE IS A CONNECTION WITH THE KULTURBESITZ, HE SAID IT MIGHT BE ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE UK TO APPROVE IT. THIS IS THE TYPE OF PATTERN WHICH SEEMS DESTINED TO IRRITATE RELATIONS WITH THE EAST WITHOUT SUFFICIENT COMPENSATION FOR BERLIN. MEICHSNER RESPONDED THAT THE BERLINERS THEMSELVES LAY GREAT WEIGHT ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BERLIN CONNECTION AND EMPHASIZED THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE FRG/BERLIN TIES.

11. VON BRAUNMUEHL SAID THAT HE WOULD REPORT THE ALLIED VIEWS IN SUMMARY FORM AS FOLLOWS, RECOGNIZING THAT CAPITALS HAVE NOT BEEN CONSULTED:

(A) THE ALLIES ARE RELIEVED THAT THE OLD PROJECT

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PAGE 04 BONN 03012 02 OF 03 161855Z

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 01 BONN 03012 03 OF 03 161859Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 03 OF 03 BONN 03012

HAS BEEN DROPPED.

(B) THEY ARE INTERESTED IN THE NEW PROJECT INSOFAR
AS IT CONCERNS BERLIN.

(C) THEY ARE CONCERNED THAT THE NEW PROJECT MAY
LEAD TO DIFFICULTIES IN SOME AREAS.

(D) THE CONNECTION WITH THE KULTURBESITZ MAY
CAUSE PARTICULAR DIFFICULTIES.

(E) THE ALLIES WISH TO BE CONSULTED BEFORE THINGS
PROGRESS TOO FAR.

12. COMMENT: IT WAS PROBABLY A VAIN HOPE THAT THE
NATIONALSTIFTUNG PROBLEM WOULD BE RESOLVED AS PAIN-
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PAGE 02 BONN 03012 03 OF 03 161859Z

LESSLY AS HAD APPEARED TO BE THE CASE UNTIL NOW, AND WE
CAN PRESUMABLY EXPECT TO HEAR MORE OF THIS. IN OUR
VIEW, THE NEW PROPOSAL WILL CAUSE NO LEGAL PROBLEMS
WITH RESPECT TO THE STATUS OF BERLN (NOR FOR THAT MATTER
WOULD THE PRIOR ONE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE
NATIONALSTIFTUNG) BUT IT CAN BE EXPECTED TO DRAW SOVIET
AND GDR PROTESTS. THE SOVIETS MAY TAKE SOME SECRET
SATISFACTION FROM THE SUSPICION THAT THEIR COMPLAINTS
HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE ABANDONMENT OF THE ORIGINAL
PROPOSAL. NONETHELESS, THE REVISED PLAN (IF
IT IS REALIZED) WILL DOUBTLESS BE WIDELY PORTRAYED AS
A SUBSTITUTE FOR, OR INTERIM STEP TOWARD, THE
NATIONALSTIFTUNG, AND SUCH PUBLICITY WILL ALMOST
CERTAINLY BRING A RESPONSE. IT IS IMPORTANT, HOWEVER,
THAT NO NEW FEDERAL OFFICE WILL BE ESTABLISHED IN
BERLIN AND THIS FACT WILL GIVE THE EASTERN SIDE LESS
OF A BASIS FOR THEIR PROTESTS.

13. IT APPEARS TO BE A POLITICAL IMPERATIVE IN THE FRG

THAT THE CONCEPT COME INTO BEING IN SOME FORM AND THAT IT HAVE A BERLIN CONNECTION. VON BRAUNMUEHL MENTIONED TO THE US REP PRIVATELY THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING THE FUND WITHOUT A BERLIN CONNECTION IS ONE OF THE OPTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED. THIS WOULD BE THE IDEAL ONE FROM OUR STANDPOINT. HOWEVER, AS NOTED ABOVE, MEICHSNER INDICATED THAT SUCH A CONNECTION IS IMPORTANT TO THE BERLINERS AND, WE PRESUME, TO THE OPPOSITION. STOBBE HAS ALREADY SAID THAT ESTABLISHING AN ORGANIZATION IN BONN FOR THIS PURPOSE WOULD BE POLITICALLY UNTHINKABLE (REF E) PRESUMABLY INTER ALIA BECAUSE OF FRG/LAENDER RIVALRY. A FINAL OPTION MENTIONED WOULD BE TO ESTABLISH A CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE, WITH NO FIXED SEAT, TO ADMINISTER THE FUND BUT WE HAVE NO CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 BONN 03012 03 OF 03 161859Z

FURTHER DETAILS.

14. WHAT THE FATE OF THE DRAFT PROPOSAL WILL BE IS UNCERTAIN. WE ARE INFORMED THAT THE INTERIOR MINISTRY DRAFT HAS NOT BEEN CLEARED BY OTHER MINISTRIES AND, AS SUCH, IT MAY REPRESENT A MAXIMALIST POSITION OF THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR, SUBJECT TO FURTHER MODIFICATION AFTER THE CHANCELLOR'S DISCUSSION.
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